

Message Text

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ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /022 R

DRAFTED BY S/PRS:JMORDWAY:AVW
APPROVED BY S/PRS:JMORDWAY
S/S- MR. GAMBLE

-----192104 115217 /63

P R 192048Z FEB 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS STATE 038987 TOSEC 020157

FOR CARTER FROM S/PRS

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SOPN (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST (MURREY MARDER) ARTICLE,
19 FEBRBARY.
NO. 24

HEREWITH FULL TEXT OF MARDER ARTICLE HEADLINED, "CARTER FIRM
AS SOVIETS ASSAIL SUPPORT OF DISSIDENTS". BEGIN TEXT:

CARTER ADMINISTRATION HELD ITS GROUND YESTERDAY AGAINST THE
STRONGEST OFFICIAL SOVIET COMPLAINT IT HAS RECEIVED OVER
AMERICAN SUPPORT OF RUSSIAN DISSIDENTS.

IN WAKE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S PERSONAL LETTER TO LEADING
SOVIET DISSIDENT SAKHAROV, SOVIET UNION CAUTIONED AGAINST
ATTEMPTS "TO INTERFERE" IN ITS AFFAIRS UNDER "A THOUGHT-UP
PRETEXT OF 'DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS'."

WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY POWELL COUNTERED THAT "THE SOVIET
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UNION HAS IN PAST EXERCISED THEIR RIGHT TO COMMENT ON DOMES-
TIC DIFFERENCES WITHIN OUR OWN (COUNTRY)."

THE PRESIDENT "WAS NOT ATTEMPTING TO CHALLENGE GOVT OF SOVIET
UNION," SAID POWELL.

POWELL SAID PRESIDENT "WAS RESPONDING TO A LETTER FROM A

NOBEL (PEACE) PRIZE WINNER," AND HE WAS ACTING "AS THE DULY ELECTED SPOKESMAN FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN WHAT HE PERCEIVES, AND I BELIEVE CORRECTLY, TO BE THEIR WISHES IN THIS MATTER."

THERE IS ALSO "A LEGAL BASIS FOR ANY COMMENTS IN THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT" ON HUMAN RIGHTS, POWELL SAID.

IN COMPARING U.S. AND SOVIET COMMENTS ON EACH OTHER'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, POWELL CITED A MEETING OF SOVIET LEADER BREZHNEV WITH AMERICAN COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER GUS HALL, SUPPORT IN SOVIET NEWSPAPER PRAVDA FOR COMMUNIST PROF. ANGELA DAVIS DURING HER CALIFORNIA TRIAL, AND FREQUENT MOSCOW RADIO COMMENTARIES ON U.S. AFFAIRS.

THE CROSS FIRE BETWEEN CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND SOVIET UNION ON HUMAN RIGHTS HAS BEEN ESCALATING FOR THREE WEEKS. PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER TO SAKHAROV, MADE PUBLIC BY SOVIET PHYSICIST ON THURSDAY, WAS AN UNPRECEDENTED MESSAGE BY A U.S. CHIEF EXECUTIVE TO A RUSSIAN DISSIDENT. IN IT, CARTER SAID U.S. WILL "SEEK THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE."

TASS, SOVIET NEWS AGENCY, WAS FIRST TO DISCLOSE YESTERDAY THAT THURSDAY NIGHT SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON, DOBRYNIN, CALLED ON ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE HARTMAN WITH A COMPLAINT.

WITHOUT MENTIONING EITHER CARTER OR SAKHAROV, TASS SAID
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DOBRYNIN "STRESSED...THAT SOVIET SIDE RESOLUTELY REJECTS ATTEMPTS TO INTERFERE UNDER A THOUGHT-UP PRETEXT OF 'DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS' IN ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS, IN MATTERS THAT FALL WITHIN COMPETENCE OF STATES."

TASS SAID, "THE SOVIET SIDE HAS A LOT TO SAY--AND WITH GOOD REASON--CONCERNING STATE OF AFFAIRS WITH INSURANCE OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS IN U.S., HAVING IN VIEW UNEMPLOYMENT AFFECTING MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, WOMEN'S INEQUALITY, INFRINGEMENT OF CIVIL LIBERTIES OF INDIVIDUALS, GROWING CRIME RATES, AND SO ON..."

ATTEMPTS "TO IMPOSE ONE'S VIEW ON ANOTHER SIDE," TASS SAID "...WOULD ONLY COMPLICATE THEM AND MAKE MORE DIFFICULT THE SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS" BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS.

NO REFERENCE WAS MADE TO ANY SPECIFIC PROBLEMS. LARGEST ISSUE ON CURRENT U.S.-SOVIET AGENDA IS RESUMPTION OF NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS. AT STATE DEPT, SPOKES-

MAN BROWN SAID, "WE BELIEVE OTHER ELEMENTS OF OUR RELNSHIP WITH SOVIET UNION SHOULD GO FORWARD ON THEIR OWN MERITS."

HE SAID, "WE OBVIOUSLY DO NOT CONSIDER OUR STATEMENTS TO BE INTERFERENCE IN SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS."

CARTER'S DECISION TO WRITE SAKHAROV, IN REPLY TO SAKHAROV'S APPEAL TO HIM, TROUBLES SOME EXPERTS ON SOVIET AFFAIRS AS A HAZARDOUS INVOLVEMENT OF PRESIDENT'S PRESTIGE. IN RESPONS TO INQUIRIES ABOUT DISAGREEMENT, STATE DEPT SPOKESMAN BROWN SAID "I WANT TO PUT DOWN ANY NOTION THAT THERE IS ANY WAVE OF DISSENT ON THIS MATTER; THAT SIMPLY IS NOT TRUE."

"THE STATE DEPT WAS INVOLVED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE PROCESS" SAID BROWN, IN "DRAWING UP THE LETTER AND SENDING IT." POWELL, WHEN ASKED IF THERE IS CONCERN THAT SOVIET SUP-PRESSION OF DISSIDENTS MAY ONLY INTENSIFY, AS SOME SPECIAL-UNCLASSIFIED

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ISTS FEAR, SAID THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD NOT HAVE ACTED UNLESS IT THOUGHT WHAT IT WAS DOING WAS RIGHT AND DISSIDENTS DID ALSO.

IN GENEVA YESTERDAY, AT A MTG OF UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION U.S.REP ALLARD LOWENSTEIN SAID HE WILL SEEK ACTION MONDAY TO EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET DETENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGNERS. SOVIET REP VAERIAN ZORIN SAID COMMISSION IS "NOT ENTITLED TO DISCUSS" INTERNAL SOVIET AFFAIRS.

VP MONDALE IS SCHEDULED TO MEET TUESDAY WITH ANOTHER SOVIET DISSIDENT, EXILED VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY, WHO WAS RELEASED IN DECEMBER. IN ADDITION, A MTG BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND BUKOVSKY IS "VERY LIKELY," SPOKESMAN POWELL SAID THURSDAY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PRESS COMMENTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, DIPLOMATIC PROTESTS, DISSIDENT FACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Message ID: 7953f2c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PRS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Media Identifier:
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Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3272192
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WASHINGTON POST (MURREY MARDER) ARTICLE, 19 FEBRBARY. NO. 24
TAGS: SOPN, US, UR, WASHINGTON POST, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (MARDER, MURREY)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7953f2c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009